THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA: (a) to (e) According to the assessment of Geological Survey of India, the coal reserves in Maharashtra upto a depth of 6000 metres are 6276.53 million tonnes as on 1-1-1993. These reserves are located in Chanda, Wardha, Kamptee, Umrer, Bander, Nand, Makiardhokra and Bokhara coalefields. The Government have taken steps to exploit the coal reserves in the State matching with the projected demand by operating existing mines, implementing sanctioned projects and taking up new schemes. Coal production in the State is expected to be about 30 million tonnes by 1996-97 as against a production of 24.73 million tonnes in 1991-92.

**Stagnation in production**

2324. SHRI GAYA SINGH:

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production from underground mines has been stagnating at around 80 million tonnes for the last few years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to raise the production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) (a) to (c) : Figures of coal production from underground mines in Coal India Limited (CIL) and Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) are given below:—

(million tonnes)

| Year | Coal production from underground mines | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | CIL | SCCL | TOTAL |
| 1989-90 | 58.70 | 12.03 | 70.73 |
| 1990-91 | 55.84 | 11.12 | 66.96 |
| 1991-92 | 56.63 | 12.30 | 68.93 |

Most of the underground mines are old and the coal production from these mines has been stagnating due to geo-mining problems like steep and multiple seams, occurance of fires^ water logged old workings in adjoining areas, built-up surface structures which need protection by sand stowing etc.

Steps taken to augment coal production, inter-alia, include opening of new mines, modernisation of existing mines application of new technologies to achieve maximum results and ensuring timely availability of inputs and infrastructural facilities.

**Price rise due to new wholesale distribution system**

2325. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently launched a new wholesale coal distribution system in the country;